

FACT SHEET ON AGING AND MENTAL RETARDATION

- 1. Persons with mental retardation/developmental disability live past age 50 and account for 1-3% of older citizens.**
- 2. Most persons with DD/MR are managed at home (80%).**
- 3. Health problems are common in older persons with mental retardation, including seizure disorders (23%), heart disease (14%), and hypertension (20%).**
- 4. Families of most older persons with DD/MR have no contingency plan for caregiver loss (70%).**
- 5. Behavioral problems are common in older persons with DD/MR (20-40%).**
- 6. Significant numbers of older DD/MR persons receive psychiatric medications (24%).**
- 7. Many older persons with mild DD/MR are not officially diagnosed as having intellectual disability.**
- 8. Most older persons with DD/MR want to live in a community setting either with family or in a supervised group home.**
- 9. Symptoms of dementia in a DD/MR person include loss of ADL, i.e., activities of daily living function, new behavior problems, or loss of intellectual functions.**
- 10. Behavioral changes or loss of ADL function in older persons with DD/MR require a careful evaluation to exclude treatable medical problems or psychiatric disorders, e.g., depression.**

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